Syllabus: FORE XXXX: Selected Topics in Foresight

AI-Augmented Foresight: Applications and Horizons

Summer 2026

Course Time: [TBD] **Course Location:** Zoom (Link to be provided)

Instructor: Simeon Spearman ([sspearman@uh.edu]) **Preferred Communication method:** via Canvas **Office Hours:** [TBD]

A note about accommodations: Students who require individualized accommodations for this course must inform the professor and follow university procedures in order that appropriate arrangements can be made. For information about services provided by the Dart Center, please call 713.743.5400 or see the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center website for more information.

The rise of generative AI and other advanced artificial intelligence paradigms presents a fundamental shift for the practice of strategic foresight. This course explores the intersection of AI and foresight, examining both the practical application of new tools and the profound implications for the future of the field itself. A central theme will be the debate between AI-as-augmentation versus AI-as-replacement, encouraging students to think critically about how these technologies can enhance, rather than supplant, human strategic thinking. Students will gain hands-on experience with current AI tools to augment the Framework Foresight process, from horizon scanning to scenario development. We will also investigate the diverse technical approaches to AI—from Large Language Models and Composite AI to emerging paradigms like Neuro-Symbolic AI and Joint-Embedding Architectures—to better understand their current capabilities, limitations, and future trajectories.

The class is organized into a seven-week journey:

1. **Introducing AI & Strategic Foresight**
2. **AI-Augmented Horizon Scanning**
3. **Scenario Archetypes & AI Narrative Building**
4. **Critical & Ethical Futures**
5. **Divergent Visions of AI Futures**
6. **Tools Studio & Industry Insights**
7. **Capstone Showcase & Synthesis**

Some knowledge of foresight methods, tools, and processes will be assumed. To prepare or refresh yourself you can refer to the Framework Foresight chapters in *Teaching about the Future* by Hines & Bishop.

Required Texts & Media

This course incorporates a diverse range of instructional resources, including books, articles, films, and software demonstrations. A computer with a high-speed internet connection is required.

1. Films:

- *Her* (2013)
- *After Yang* (2021)
- *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991)
- *WALL-E* (2008)

2. Core Texts:

- Hines & Bishop (2013) *Teaching about the Future* (Framework Foresight chapters)
- Slaughter (1996) *Critical Futures Studies* (excerpts)
- Carvalho (2024) *How Generative AI Will Transform Strategic Foresight* (chapters 2 & 5)

3. Supplementary Articles & Scenarios:

- Altman (2024) “The Gentle Singularity”
- Kokotajlo et al. (2025) “AI 2027” scenario
- Selected sci-fi shorts or episodes for Week 5 discussion.

Additional readings, videos, and tool tutorials will be provided each week in Canvas.

Activities & Schedule

A detailed schedule with weekly topics and readings will be provided in a separate document. The course culminates in a capstone project where students apply AI tools to a foresight project of their choosing. Key activities include:

- **Week 2:** Hands-on scanning with Copilot/ChatGPT; proposal of capstone projects.
- **Week 3:** Using GPT-aided tools for scenario writing and visualization.
- **Week 4:** Applying Slaughter’s critical lens to AI ethics, bias, and inclusive foresight.
- **Week 5:** Debating divergent AI futures (superforecasters vs. tech-utopians vs. pop-culture dystopias) and exploring the technical debates between integration (Neuro-Symbolic) vs. emergence (JEA) approaches.
- **Week 6:** "Bring-your-own-tool" workshop and a guest demonstration from Tristan Markwell on his tool, markwellfutures.com, which applies AI to the Framework Foresight process.
- **Week 7:** Capstone project presentations and synthesis of lessons learned.

Grading

The final grade is an average of assignments (85%) and discussion posts (15%). Most weeks have assignments that are typically due the Sunday before the following class. Feedback is provided at the time of grading. As this is an accelerated session, it is important to keep up with the submission of Assignments. Late Assignments are penalized 10 points and 10 additional points off for each week thereafter. This is a strict late work policy.

Each assignment is weighted equally. The assignments are:

1. AI-Augmented Scanning Journal
2. AI-Generated Scenario Analysis
3. Critical Futures Essay (on AI ethics)
4. AI Tools Comparison Report
5. Capstone Project Proposal
6. Final Capstone Project & Presentation

Grading Criteria

- **90-100 points (A) Far Exceeds Expectations:** Demonstrates exceptional mastery of concepts, expression, and application of course materials.
- **80-89 points (B) Solid Competence:** Demonstrates ability to meet specifications of assignments and evaluation criteria.
- **70-79 points (C) Minimally Met Expectations:** Demonstrates marginal performance on assignments and meeting evaluation criteria.
- **65-69 points (D) Serious Deficits in Competence:** Unacceptable performance on assignments and meeting evaluation criteria.
- **<65 points (F) Failure to Meet Expectations:** Inadequate effort on assignments and meeting evaluation criteria.

AI Policy

The use of AI tools is permitted and encouraged as a core component of this course. We will critically examine the role of AI as both a tool for augmentation and a potential replacement for human tasks. The goal is for you to learn to use these tools more effectively. It is YOUR responsibility as a student who has chosen to use these tools to keep abreast of any changes at the department, school, or university level.

You must cite the use of any AI Tool used in an assignment including the name of the tool(s), date, and the ratio of Human to AI contribution with a description.

- **Example:** *ChatGPT-4, July 21, 2026, 40% Human through prompt development, critical analysis of output, and revision of text / 60% AI generated response.*

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT USING LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS

- **Fabrication.** AI can lie and produce plausible sounding but incorrect information. Don't trust anything it says at face value. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool(s) and the presence of such an error will result in an automatic, permanent 10-point grade deduction. It works best for topics you understand and can verify.
- **AI bias.** AI can carry biases, stemming from its training data or human intervention. You will need to critically consider answers and be aware of the potential for these sorts of biases.
- **Privacy concerns.** When data is entered into an AI, it can be used for future training. Do not share anything with an AI that you want to keep private.

Interaction

The course is conducted online. The expectation for this class is that students will actively participate. Our philosophy is you will not only learn from the instructors, but also from peers. Class interactions may involve discussions about work-related challenges; please use discretion when sharing and follow the Las Vegas rule—"what you hear in class, stays in class."

University Policies

- **Academic honesty policy:** All UH students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism, using research without citations or using a created production (such as other people's words) without quotations or citations, will result in a grade penalty or failure of the course. Internet sources must be credited according to the site's recommended citation guideline if available. If no citation guideline is provided, then the date, URL, site owner, and author must be included.
- **Incompletes:** A grade of "I" is given only in cases of documented emergency or special circumstances late in the semester, provided that the student has been making satisfactory progress.
- **Withdrawals:** Please consult the university's academic calendar for the last day to drop or withdraw for the summer session.